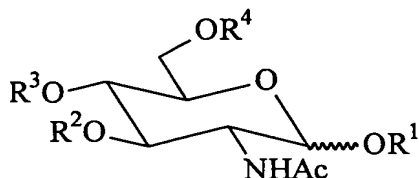


CLAIMS

1. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (1):

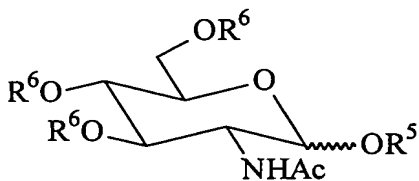
5 formula (1)



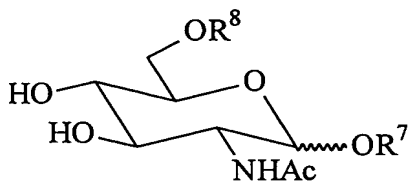
wherein R¹ is a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms; R², R³, and R⁴ are hydrogen atoms or acyl groups having 2 to 18 carbon atoms and may be all the same or different from others; the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β; provided that R¹, R², R³, and R⁴ must not be all hydrogen atoms.

2. A skin external preparation containing the N-acetylglucosamine derivative according to claim 1.

3. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (2) or (3):
formula (2)



wherein R⁵ is an alkyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms; R⁶ is a hydrogen atom or an acetyl group; and the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β: or
formula (3)

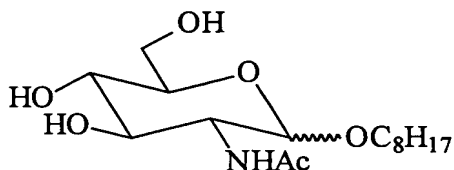


wherein R⁷ is a hydrogen atom or an alkyl group having 2 to 18 carbon atoms; R⁸ is an acyl group having 2 to 18 carbon

atoms; and the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

4. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (4):

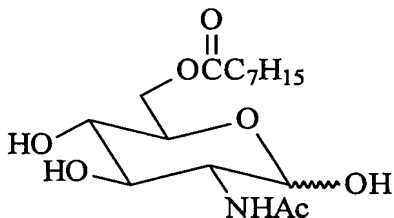
5 formula (4)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

10 5. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (5):

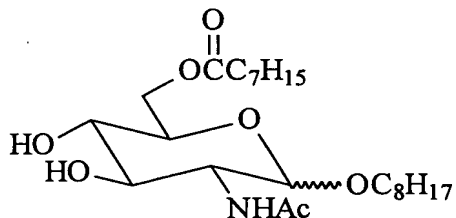
formula (5)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

15 6. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (6):

formula (6)

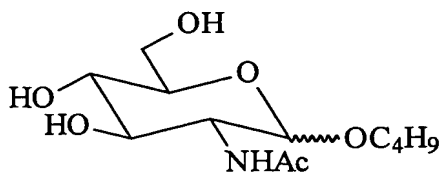


wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

20

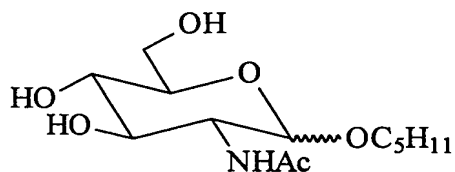
7. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (7):

formula (7)



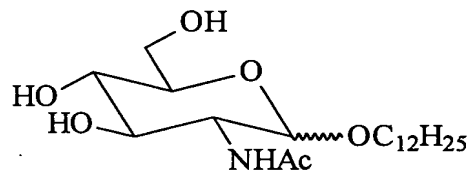
wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

8. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by
 5 the following formula (8):
 formula (8)



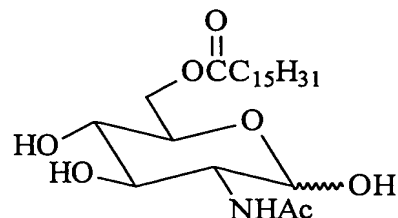
wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

9. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by
 10 the following formula (9):
 formula (9)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

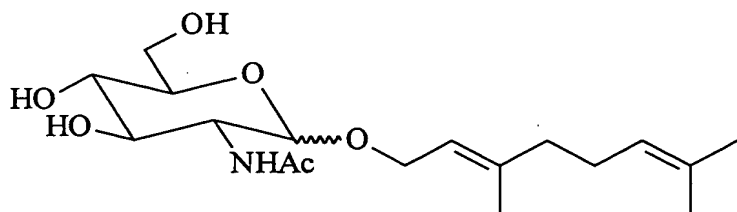
10. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by
 15 the following formula (10):
 formula (10)



- 20 wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

11. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by
 the following formula (11):

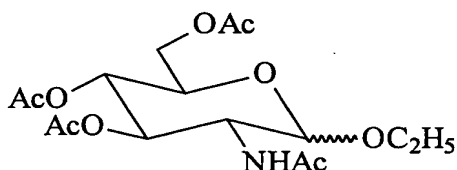
formula (11)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

- 5 12. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (12):

formula (12)

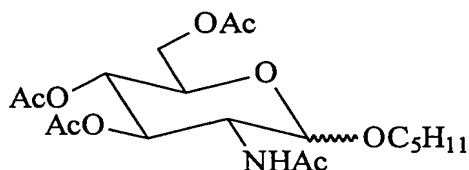


wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

10

13. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (13):

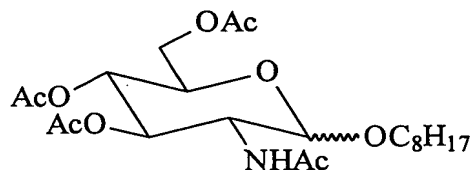
formula (13)



- 15 wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

14. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (14):

formula (14)



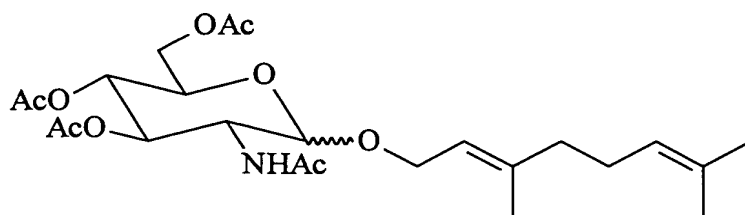
20

wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

15. An N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by

the following formula (15):

formula (15)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

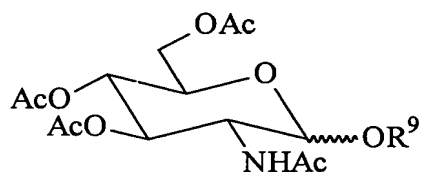
5

16. A skin external preparation containing the N-acetylglucosamine derivative according to claim 3.

17. A hyaluronic acid production-promoting agent
10 containing the N-acetylglucosamine derivative according to claim 3 as active ingredient.

18. A hyaluronic acid production-promoting agent
15 containing an N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (16) as active ingredient:

formula (16)

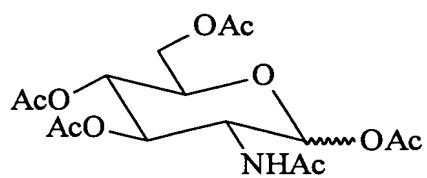


wherein R⁹ is an acyl group having 2 to 16 carbon atoms and the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .

20

19. A skin external preparation containing the N-acetylglucosamine derivative according to claim 18.

20. A skin external preparation containing as
25 active ingredient the N-acetylglucosamine derivative represented by the following formula (17):
formula (17)



wherein the steric structure at position 1 may be α or β .